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In The News

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PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. -- U.S. Northern Command is working closely with Department of Defense officials to anticipate what military resources may be requested for recovery operations following the onslaught of Hurricane Isabel.

The dangerous storm expected to make landfall somewhere between North Carolina and New Jersey as early as Thursday.

"We have not received any requests for assistance relative to Hurricane Isabel, but U.S. Northern Command stands ready should our assistance be required," said Mike Perini, USNORTHCOM director of public affairs. "The U.S. military has a long, proud and successful history of providing assistance to civil authorities and today that responsibility lies with U.S. Northern Command."

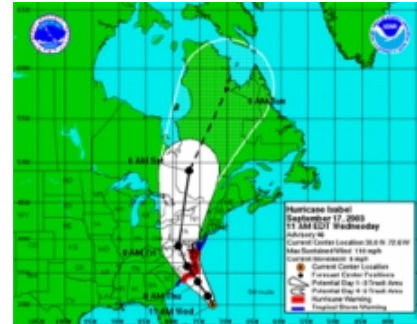


Photo credit: [National Weather Service](#)

Perini noted that when requested by a lead federal agency -- in this case FEMA -- and approved by the secretary of defense, the Department of Defense may provide unique assets to civil authorities and other federal agencies.

"The United States has historically deployed its forces when and where required to provide humanitarian assistance to help state and local officials cope with natural and man-made emergencies," Perini said.

USNORTHCOM is tracking Hurricane Isabel and reviewing its plans and procedures in the event the command is called on for assistance. In addition, USNORTHCOM has identified a defense coordinating officer who will orchestrate military support and provide liaison to the emergency support functions.

In addition to defending the nation, U.S. Northern Command provides military assistance to civil authorities in accordance with U.S. laws and as directed by the President or Secretary of Defense.

If requested, this could mark the first military assistance for civil authorities, or MACA, mission USNORTHCOM executes since announcing it has achieved full operational capability Sept. 11.

"Military assistance to civil authorities is always in support of a lead federal agency, such as FEMA, and U.S. Northern Command only becomes involved after an emergency exceeds the management capabilities of local, state and federal agencies," Perini noted.

Military civil support includes domestic disaster relief operations that occur during fires, hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. Support also includes counter-drug operations and consequence management assistance, such as would occur after a terrorist event employing a weapon of mass destruction.